

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended): A golf club having a metallic hollow golf club head, said golf club comprising:

a face portion disposed at a front of said metallic hollow golf club head and having a hitting surface for hitting a golf ball; and  
a body portion constituting a remaining part thereof, said body portion comprising:

a sole forming a lower portion of said metallic hollow golf club head;  
a crown forming an upper portion of said metallic hollow golf club head;  
a toe forming a forepart of said metallic hollow golf club head;  
a heel forming a rear part of said metallic hollow golf club head;  
a back positioned opposite said face portion to form a back part of said metallic hollow golf club head; and  
a hosel to which a shaft is connected,

wherein said golf club further comprises:

an elastically deformable portion which is formed in said body portion in the vicinity of the end portion of said face portion and has a structure that can be deformed elastically in response to said hitting; and

a high-rigidity portion which is disposed in said body portion on the side of said back of said elastically deformable portion for increasing the rigidity of said disposed portion and for restoring elastic deformation with repulsion force close to explosiveness.

2. (Original): The golf club according to claim 1, wherein  
said elastically deformable portion is disposed in an area where the lower portion of said face portion and said sole are joined; and  
said high-rigidity portion is disposed in said sole for increasing the rigidity of said sole.

3. (Original): The golf club according to claim 1 or 2 , wherein  
said high-rigidity portion is a high-rigidity body which is disposed in the form of a plurality of sections.

4. (Original): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein  
said elastically deformable portion includes the lower portion of said face portion that is bent at a bending angle of not less than 90 degrees to form a bent portion when said golf club is placed in an address state, and in a section taken along a vertical plane containing a line perpendicular to said hitting surface, said sole which is joined to this bent portion is convexly projected toward the upper portion of said metallic hollow golf club head.

5. (Original): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein

said elastically deformable portion includes the lower portion of said face portion that is bent at a bending angle of not less than 90 degrees to form a bent portion when said golf club is placed in an address state, and in a section taken along a vertical plane containing a line perpendicular to said hitting surface, said sole which is joined to this bent portion is convexly projected toward said lower portion of said metallic hollow golf club head.

6. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein

said elastically deformable portion includes the lower portion of said face portion that is bent at a bending angle of not less than 90 degrees to form a bent portion, and a plurality of holes are provided in said sole which is joined to the bent portion.

7. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein

said elastically deformable portion includes the lower portion of said face portion that is bent at a bending angle of not less than 90 degrees to form a bent portion, and part of said sole which is joined to the bent portion is replaced with a thin plate.

8. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein

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said elastically deformable portion includes the lower portion of said face portion that is bent at a bending angle of not less than 90 degrees to form a bent portion, and part of said sole which is joined to the bent portion is divided into sections which are displaceable relative to each other.

9. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein  
in said elastically deformable portion, said sole has a smaller plate thickness than that of the bent portion.

10. (Original): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein  
a part of the sole in said elastically deformable portion forms an arch-shaped groove.

11. (Original): The golf club according to claim 2, wherein  
a part of the sole which is joined to the bent portion in said elastically deformable portion forms a groove having a surface approximately parallel to the hitting surface.

12. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 9, wherein  
in said elastically deformable portion, the angle  $\alpha$  of a gentle bend G formed by intersection of a line S1 tangent to a surface of said face portion with a line S2 tangent to said

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bent portion on the surface of said face portion is 90 degrees or larger, and the angle  $\alpha 1$  of a gentle bend H formed by intersection of said tangent line S2 with a line S3 tangent to a surface of said sole is 90 degrees or larger.

13. (Withdrawn): The golf club according to claim 12, wherein  
in said elastically deformable portion, at least one arch-shaped groove is provided in a surface of said sole in the vicinity of said bend H, and wherein the angle  $\alpha 2$  of a gentle bend J formed by intersection of a line S4 tangent to said groove with said tangent line S2 is 90 degrees or larger, the angle  $\alpha 3$  of a gentle bend K formed by intersection of a line S5 tangent to said groove with said tangent line S3 is 90 degrees or larger, and said bend G, said bend J, and said bend K form a continuous gently curved line.